Southeast Asia is an economically vibrant, politically varied region of half a billion people in ten countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Southeast Asia Forum (SEAF) in The Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center is the only university-based program in the United States dedicated to researching contemporary, policy-relevant Southeast Asian affairs. Its location at Stanford University affords easier interaction with scholars and institutions in Asia, while its distance from Washington DC encourages broad, nonpartisan consideration of key issues.
“The Southeast Asia Forum seeks to bring Southeast Asia to Stanford, and Stanford to Southeast Asia.”

DONALD K. EMMERSON, DIRECTOR, SEAF

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RECENT AND PLANNED PROJECTS

STRATEGIC SINGAPORE  Singapore’s location between mainland and island Southeast Asia—and the concentration of area experts in its universities and think tanks—make
The Southeast Asia Forum (SEAF) seeks to:

• undertake and encourage innovative research on Southeast Asian issues and conditions;
• stimulate fresh perspectives on the policy implications of regional events and trends;
• create opportunities for scholars and other professionals with Southeast Asian expertise to discuss and refine their ideas;
• help Stanford University students learn more about Southeast Asia; and thus
• bring Southeast Asia to Stanford and Stanford to Southeast Asia.

Asian Regionalism  All of the region’s ten countries belong to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which will celebrate its 40th anniversary in August 2007. The ASEAN Secretariat has agreed to assist SEAF in planning an international conference on Asian regionalism—its achievements, shortcomings, and prospects—including the roles of China, Japan, India, and the United States.

European Linkages  Southeast Asianist scholars in Europe and the United States have much to share but few occasions to do so. SEAF is exploring a pilot project with French counterparts to enable young European scholars with Southeast Asian expertise to exchange views and findings with their American colleagues.

Publications and Outreach  SEAF is preparing a book manuscript on the scholarly and policy implications of the words used to describe acts of violence committed, in Southeast Asia and elsewhere,
in the name of Islam. A second SEAF book, on the sometimes troubled relations between Southeast Asian studies and American political science, is forthcoming from Stanford University Press. The Stanley Foundation recently published the recommendations of a conference that SEAF hosted on U.S. policies toward Southeast Asian regionalism.

SEAF sponsors the burgeoning Southeast Asian Leadership Network, launched by Stanford students, which brings computers and educational software to needy secondary schools in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand. SEAF also works with the Malaysia Forum—an independent but SEAF-inspired organization of Malaysians—that convenes meetings at Stanford and elsewhere on contemporary issues in that country.

Throughout the academic year, SEAF invites experts and practitioners from around the world to come to Stanford to share their thinking and writing on Southeast Asia. SEAF’s director lectures frequently, gives media interviews, travels to and in Southeast Asia, writes widely for general and scholarly publication, and teaches courses on the region. These courses include a three-week overseas seminar, conducted in Singapore, for selected Stanford undergraduates.